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INTERNATIONAL CONFEDERATION OF FREE TRADE UNIONS

ICFTU OnLine...

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South Africa : 46 trade unionists arrested during a peaceful demonstration at the Swaziland border.

Brussels, 13 April 2006: The ICFTU has expressed its full support to the AFRO call of 12th April to President M'Beki for the unconditional release of 46 trade unionists arrested yesterday. Those trade unionists, including the Deputy President of COSATU, Deputy President of NUMSA, Deputy President of NEHAWU, the Treasurer of NEHAWU and Provincial Secretary of COSATU in Kwazulu Natal were arrested yesterday at the Pongola crossing following a peaceful demonstration in solidarity with Swazi workers and people who over the years have been calling for full democratisation in Swaziland. COSATU General Secretary, Vavi Zwelimzima, said that the South African unions had a duty to support democracy in Swaziland, as this was one of the main ideals that trade unions all over the world stood for.

The ICFTU African Regional Organization, (ICFTU-AFRO), in a letter to President Mbeki dated April 12, (<http://www.icftu.org/www/PDF/protestMbeki.pdf>), strongly condemned the arrest of the trade unionists and their leaders that took place during this peaceful demonstration. The police brutality and use of excessive force on peaceful civilian that left eight trade unionists hospitalized with two having suffered serious injuries were unacceptable, underlined AFRO.

The ICFTU represents 155 million workers in 236 affiliated organisations in 154 countries and territories. <http://www.icftu.org>
ICFTU is also a partner in Global Unions. <http://www.global-unions.org>

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